The COMMONWEAL

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Editors: EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.
PHILIP BURNHAM *(now on duty with the armed forces)*

HARRY LORIN BINSSE, *Managing Editor;* MICHAEL WILLIAMS, *Special Editor;* C. G. PAULDING, *Literary Editor;* JOHN C. CORT, *Associate Editor;* JOHN BRUBAKER, *Advertising Manager.*

"America's Daily Bread"

THE THREE PAGES which follow this week's editorials represent an unusual undertaking for THE COMMONWEAL. We hope that the contents of these pages will help to cast genuine light on what is truly a serious situation, not only for America but for the world. Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of this situation lies in the fact that if it continues, we shall not be able to tide over starving European nations when the day comes for us to invade the Continent.

The present food situation in the United States of course somewhat modifies the technique to be used in feeding Europe's children. Together with Canada, we still have great surpluses of cereals, especially wheat, and these supplies will not be greatly diminished if we use what is needed of them to alleviate starvation abroad. But as we have repeatedly said in recent editorials, what is necessary to help Europe's starving children is to obtain permission from everyone concerned for idle Swedish boats, under a flag which would be safe from attack, to carry the necessary food principally from South America, where there are still surpluses which we cannot buy for our own use because United Nations ships are not available to transport them. We therefore urgently advocate the feeding of European children, but bearing it clearly in mind that we cannot in this country supply all the means for accomplishing this desperately necessary task.

During the last week or two, things have been happening very fast in Washington along the agricultural front. What has been accomplished to date does not yet materially alter the situation, although the steps taken would seem to be in the right direction. Further events may make unnecessary certain details of the program we outline, or rectify certain details in the picture we paint. But making whatever allowances new developments may require, we believe that the general position taken in "America's Daily Bread" will long remain sound.

Trouble on Labor's Flank

TROUBLE is brewing for labor on a front that has been pretty much ignored, and in several cases trouble has already boiled over. Last week another state, Kansas, joined Idaho in passing a law regulating trade unions. The Kansas statute requires "licensing of labor union agents; financial reports by unions; reports of fees, dues and assessments of members; and reports of salaries paid union officials. It prohibits sitdown strikes and jurisdictional disputes."

Similar bills are pending in about ten other states in the West and Far West, most of which require the making public of financial and other information that local employers are just itching to get their hands on. If this were all these bills provided, it would be enough to damn them.

It is one thing, and a good thing, that unions should show their books in detail to their own members and to competent public authority. To insist that they show these figures to employers is as unreasonable and unjust as demanding that every company should supply its competitors with a complete breakdown of its income and sales. In areas where a union's organization is new or nonexistent, the obstacle to growth thereby provided is worth a whole carload of labor spies.

The tragic aspect of the present situation, however, is that most labor leaders are taking the attitude that absolutely no laws designed to regulate union affairs are, or can be, acceptable. And this completely negative attitude is best calculated, we believe, to guarantee that whatever laws are passed will be written by those who are either ignorant of labor's problems, or flatly hostile.

We believe that not only is some sort of labor regulation inevitable, but that it is actually necessary, and that the sooner labor's spokesmen permit their friends in Congress and the state legislatures to frame such legislation, the happier and safer all of us will be.

For example, union members need and should have legal protection for their right to criticize their leadership, to caucus, to meet regularly and determine union policy freely, to have free and

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honest elections, to have fair and impartial trial on any charge of union misconduct. The state need not worry about the regulation of American unions if it will only insure American trade unionists this very democratic power to regulate themselves. We have faith in their will and ability to use that power wisely and well.

Already the New York chapter of ACTU (Association of Catholic Trade Unionists) has proposed such a program of labor legislation. We most earnestly hope that labor's national spokesmen will see their way clear to following this foresighted and public-spirited lead.

The Cult of Jefferson

POLITICAL ORATORS down the decades have laid claim to Thomas Jefferson. The Democrats in general have consistently claimed as their own the great American statesman whose two hundredth anniversary is currently to be celebrated in imposing style. Certain lesser groups have also cited Jefferson as an incontestable authority: proponents of strict construction of the Constitution and limitation of the power and activities of the Federal Government; advocates of states' rights; devotees of agrarianism, often non-political; American liberals generally. He provides all of them with plenty of ammunition.

One of Jefferson's most interesting trains of thought starts from the economic self-sufficiency he achieved on his estate at Monticello. He saw the United States primarily as an agricultural nation, was forced to recognize that industry was inevitable, but held out for restricting its growth. What he feared was the expansion of a vast rootless, restless proletariat who would prove easy prey for political demagogues. Apparently he held that sizable trade with Europe would involve us in that continent's inevitable wars and favored instead the development of hemisphere economy. In the end, however, he yielded to the popular American fallacy that we could enjoy the most intimate economic ties with the Old World without being drawn into its political conflicts.

What is basic in Jefferson's political philosophy, however, comes from Aristotle, Saint Thomas and John Locke; that the end of government and laws is happiness. This note in the Declaration of Independence occurs again and again down through his state papers and private correspondence to the end of his long and fruitful life.

A new group of "Jeffersonian Democrats," old-line Southern Democrats, is slated to make its appearance in the coming presidential campaign. In opposing the tendencies toward centralization in the present Administration, it is in the Jeffersonian tradition. But in opposing certain key social gains and objectives of the New Deal, it goes directly counter to the heart of Jefferson's political doctrines. Regardless of the importance this Democratic revolt comes to assume, here, on the domestic front, is the basic dilemma of our American democracy as it stands today. It is a tribute to the stature of the Sage of Monticello that in 1943 it is impossible for us to think of political democracy in other than Jeffersonian terms.

Russia

THE ORDEAL through which the Soviet Union is successfully passing will produce one phenomenon with which we must reckon. It is in precisely such a fiery furnace that a united national consciousness is best annealed and made strong; if the glass does not crack before it cools, its structure will have been made far more durable by the great heat. We see no signs of any shattering of the present Russian régime; on the contrary, it seems daily to gather strength, to fall back upon past and long-scorned sources of strength, upon the religion it sought to destroy, the heroes of an earlier history it once despised.

It is wisdom to think now in terms of doing one's utmost to remain at peace with the power which will emerge on Europe's eastern borders. Almost certainly there will be many things in the internal government of Russia of which we shall not approve. There were some things in Czarist Russia which no American and no Catholic could approve, and yet our relations with Russia under the Czars were singularly friendly. What we must undertake in the present instance is the admittedly greater task of getting on even half as well with a régime we should abhor if it were applied to ourselves, as, indeed, we would have abhorred the substantial lack of freedom, including real religious freedom, under Czarist rule.

There are at present two things that make it difficult for us to see how this can be possible. One is the utter ruthlessness of Stalinism, revealed in the execution of the Polish labor leaders, Ehrlich and Alter, in the continuing treatment meted out in Russia to Poles transported as far as the utmost reaches of Siberia—both acts aimed at future aggression against Poland. The second thing is closely related to the first: it is the proposed "rectification" of Russian frontiers after the war. No problem could be more difficult. There is cogency in the Russian demand for greater defense in depth; there is heart-rending justice in the demands of the people who are likely to be "taken over" that their liberties and rights be respected. We have repeatedly advocated seeking to reconcile these demands, by the formation of some sort of federation of these states under Russian control as far as foreign and military policy are concerned, but with real guarantees and honest fulfilment thereof concerning the human rights of their inhabitants.

It may seem naïve to put it so, but the only policy we can see which can prevent the growth

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of anti-Russian (as well as anti-communist) feeling in this country, a feeling that could easily mount into a destructive and tragic wave of hatred, is for us to exert every pressure at our disposal against Russian or communist ruthlessness, or aggressiveness, and to insist equally that in all our dealings with the Soviet State, no suspicion of petty chicanery on our part be allowed to creep in. And let us not sanctimoniously assume that the United States (to use Mr. Wallace's over-emphatic words) never "double-crossed" anybody. Our Latin American neighbors will gladly help our memories in case we ourselves should forget.

The Cousins

M. DE CHARLUS, during the other war, had a most unhappy time. For his distress there were, of course, curious and personal causes which do not concern us, but there were reasons proceeding from the nature of the family to which he belonged which are interesting to consider. He used the minor title of Baron, but he was also Prince of this and that, in Austria and elsewhere, and his family was European rather than strictly French. He was a Frenchman but his feeling for France could not annul his feeling for Europe; he could not abolish his relatives merely because there was a war, he could not deny his conviction that these relatives of his were the men to bring about a peace. But the French would not trust his Austrian cousins: they rejected all overtures and Charlus was left unhappily to witness the final breakdown of a system which for so long had provided Europe with what might be called a unity through cousinship. My cousin the Emperor, my cousin the Czar, my cousin Ferdinand, my cousin the little king.

I trust there is nothing disparaging in the statement that the Austro-Hungarian monarchy finally entered the irrevocable past when Proust put Charlus and his aristocratic and European worries in his book. For it is the artist who sees when something is really gone, when something belongs to the past.

There are the facts of course. The Czar of all the Russias dead in Ekaterinburg; Wilhelm II in Doorn, Charles of Austria dead in exile. Rapidly they all have gone. The cousins are dispersed. But facts are not enough, and those who say that the kings are gone simply because they see them off their thrones might yet be wrong. There is the Count of Paris who is in Africa, there is Otto of Hapsburg who is in the United States: they have secretaries, advisers, followers and admirers; they are available, exceedingly available. There have been restorations before. If you look at the fact that the kings have gone, you must look also at the fact that there are still pretenders. The democrats, the socialists, the communists, the republicans might still be wrong in supposing that nothing will ever put Humpty Dumpty together again. But the artist is never wrong. The great artist is never wrong when it is a question of knowing what belongs to the past.

Because the other war failed to produce a lasting peace, we are apt to think of it as an uninteresting accident. We are apt to think that the real problems have arisen only in this war. But it is because the other war destroyed the order of Europe that all the conflicting ideologies now in search of a new order are possible and inevitable. The other war, not this war, marked the break with the past. It was in the other war that the century-old monarchical effort finally failed. When the survivors of the other war breathed again at the armistice, they looked at Europe and there was nothing left of whatever unity there had been in the past. There were simply the nations and there were no more kings who could call each other cousin.

It is not in the least a question of wondering whether the plans and efforts, loyalties and beliefs which prevailed in Europe's past presented, in themselves, greater values than the plans we are making now. It is not a question of determining whether or not they produced better results than we can hope for. It is no more a question, say, of deciding whether or not the Austro-Hungarian Empire provided a workable federative unit in a region of Europe which appears peculiarly difficult to organize than it is of evaluating the merits of the Italian city-states of the Renaissance. It is not in the least a question of balancing the merits of past and present, the destroyed hopes of the past with the uncertain hopes of the present. It is a question of realizing that the past is the past, and that we cannot go back into the past. We cannot go back to Greece, nor to the middle ages, nor rejoin the great and imposing procession of kings who led Europe forward step by step until their day was over.

That there should be two young men—Otto, the Count of Paris—who take seriously a duty traditional in their family to serve the state is a fact which may usefully be remembered when the existence, say, of Carol comes to mind. For, among the cousins, the time has passed when personal qualities can be important factors. The pretenders seek to reenter a system which no longer exists.

This is written for Americans. Should the French really desire the Count of Paris, should the Austrians recall Otto, that would be their affair. But that any Americans should become involved in dreams of restoration, seriously speaking, is inconceivable. The peoples of continental Europe stand unhappy, perplexed and expectant before the future. The gates to the past are closed.

C. G. PAULDING.

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America's Daily Bread: an Editorial

FOR THE FIRST TIME in history, every citizen of the United States is faced with a *possibility* of not getting an adequate diet. We do not mean merely that he will have to eat things he doesn't like. He will certainly have to do that. We do not mean that he will not get all he might like to have. He won't. We mean that, if things continue as they are going now, and if 1943 is not a year of better-than-average weather conditions, it is possible he will not get the food he needs to function at full efficiency.

Last fall the Department of Agriculture admitted that if 1943 conditions are normal, in terms of 1937-1941 crop production, 1943 harvests will be 8 percent below 1942. The end of 1942 already saw shortages. What would even smaller harvests do to our food situation?

Not long ago the extension service of the Department of Agriculture sent out a questionnaire to county extension agents, the men on the spot. Allowances must be made for the tendency of these officials to exaggerate changes. One of the questions asked was: "Will there be an acreage reduction in cultivation as compared with last year?" Almost three-quarters of the agents said that there would be such a reduction.

Another question: "Compared with normal production, what percentage of reduction, if any, do you estimate will result from all existing conditions?" Four out of five agents said there would be some reduction, and most of them estimated this reduction might be somewhere about 10, or even up to 20 percent. Partial returns as recently announced indicate a 3½ percent acreage increase, but this would not be enough to avoid a decrease in total production, and it by no means includes the whole country. Discount these judgments heavily; the conclusion remains the same. If the bumper crops of 1942 left us with shortages, what will 1943 crops do?

Here is the biggest problem facing America today. Failing to solve it can lose us the war; it is certain to lose us the peace.

The mistakes, the shortsightedness, the selfishness which have produced our present plight and which can turn that plight into disaster are to be blamed on the apathy of all Americans. On Republicans and Democrats, Conservatives and Liberals. Those who saw what was coming deserve blame, because they lacked courage to say what they knew or because they failed to make others understand them. No government agency or political party is principally responsible. The New Deal has blundered badly, but the Republicans while they were in office showed even less long-range wisdom, and show no great enlightenment in their present tactics and criticism.

We are faced with a serious food shortage; what we must do is produce more food. We can't do it by playing politics. We can do it only by using common sense and courage. Our political leaders—administration and opposition—will be inclined to use neither unless they feel that the public is aware of the essential facts, and that the public will tolerate no truckling to vested interests and no buck-passing. Voters, plain citizens must use every means at their disposal—letters, telegrams, outspoken words, pressure—to make known their feeling that here is an emergency above politics, an emergency where courage and results are the only things that count.

* * *

A few background facts.

Americans have taken it for granted that our farms produce a surplus of almost everything except those few things we must obviously import, or go without. This is simply not true, except for two or three commodities (wheat, cotton, tobacco). Mr. Hoover recently pointed this out with exactness and force. What he did not point

How This Editorial Came to Be Written

For some months now it has seemed obvious to anyone following the news that something is very wrong with the food situation.

Yet in all the confusion of reports from OPA and agricultural experts and the Farm Bureau Federation and the Farmers Union and the Grange and congressmen representing rural districts (with an occasional guarded statement from Secretary Wickard) the confusion has been so great as to leave us all at a loss.

THE COMMONWEAL felt that it could render a great public service by making use of all its sources of information, by consulting reliable persons both inside and outside government, by personal investigations on the spot—all this with a view to explaining to the American public precisely what is the reason for present and future shortages, and how shortages can be remedied.

The recent appointment of Chester C. Davis to be Food Administrator indicates that the Administration itself is disturbed at what is going on. We earnestly recommend to Mr. Davis's attention the conclusions which we have reached, for in our effort we have tried to cut clear of all political entanglements, in order to arrive at a statement, however brief and summary, of the truth.

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out and what above all needs emphasis is that the apparent surpluses of depression years were *market* surpluses, not *real* surpluses. Our farms raised more than our people could afford to *buy*, not more than they *needed*.

The moment the national income—thanks principally to defense industry wages—gave housewives a chance to buy what they wanted and needed, most surpluses simply ceased to be.

We have not yet realized what has been happening. After centuries of abundant food, of exporting vast riches in food, we now must realize that in recent years the picture has changed without our knowing it. Whole classes of Americans had not been getting enough to eat. The minute they could afford to buy enough, even a bumper crop was insufficient—a bumper crop whose increase above normal was more than twice as great as all lend-lease food shipments.

Just one illustration makes vivid this point. Men in our armed services now consume on the average twice what these same men did in civilian life; and their diet has been scientifically calculated. They are not putting on excess weight.

Another background fact. From its establishment up to the present day, the Department of Agriculture has focused its attention on problems of production and markets rather than problems of needs and use. It is traditionally the tool of the producer, not of the consumer. It has thought very little in terms of producing in order to satisfy real needs as economically as possible, but rather in terms of supplying existing markets. In peacetime this could be excused; under our normal economy it is perhaps logical; in wartime it is inexcusable. As a result, agriculture and its Department are only beginning to think in realistic terms.

Finally we must remember that our rural community in the last several decades has been splitting into two distinct social classes. At the top we have developed a greedy, intolerant, "East-Prussian-Junker" or "plantation" group of big and rich farmers. Their spokesmen are the national leaders of the Farm Bureau Federation, an organization which has much to its credit, but which today is the mouthpiece for rural reaction. Such farmers have the money; they hold many little farmers in line politically because they control marketing facilities. They can bulldoze congressmen and intimidate executive officials. They would like to own all American agriculture and turn the rest of the rural population into a peasantry. They are for low wages, higher prices, no limitations on profits.

The other social class ranges down from the two million farmers who are fairly prosperous, but who have not enough working capital to be fully efficient in a total war economy, to the most depressed farmers of all, for whom the only solution is some drastic change. Here are 1942 farmers' net cash income figures, to clarify the point:

The top ¼ of farmers got seven billion dollars.

The next ¼ got 2½ billions.

The remaining ½ got 1½ billions.

* * *

By definition, the larger operators are already working fairly efficiently. In some parts of the country they are short of labor, machinery, fertilizers. They are on top, and want to stay on top.

These farmers cannot greatly increase their production, but above all they don't want anyone else to, for fear of weakening their own paramount position.

Here is a specimen of their activities. One of their principal specialties is cotton. A few weeks ago Mr. T. W. Schultz, head of the economics department of Iowa State College, an eminently sound and independent agricultural authority, declared: "We've got so large a stock of cotton carry-over that if we didn't produce any short-staple cotton next year we'd still have plenty. You could take all the 1943 crop and dump it in the Gulf of Mexico, and you wouldn't hurt the war effort an iota." Cotton fields could well be converted to produce food—vegetable fats or green vegetables.

And yet the Secretary of Agriculture has announced what amounts to a 7 percent increase in 1943 short-staple cotton acreage.

* * *

Seven Point Program for Feeding the Nation

1. Housewives and the public must learn the techniques of keeping healthy on different diets from those they have been used to. This can only be done by an effective nation-wide educational program.
2. Farmers must learn how to produce the food we all need, by means of *existing* facilities and labor now idle, or only partly used, or used for products we don't need. This can only be done by Congress empowering the Department of Agriculture to use its existing agencies for this purpose.
3. The general average price level can and should remain what it is, with adjustments *up and down* on specific products.
4. Experienced farmers now in military service, not overseas, should be furloughed for seasonal work to supplement the inexperienced "land army."
5. Essential farm machinery and adequate parts and repair service must be made available. This has been promised by the President.
6. Credits must be extended on generous terms, and on crops as security, to the two million farmers who cannot expand without them. Opposition from commercial banks must be effectively checkmated.
7. Everyone who has the facilities and knows how should raise a garden. It's never too late to start.

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In the poll of county agents mentioned earlier, questions were asked as to what factors would be principally responsible for reduced production in 1943. Labor and machinery won the most votes. Unsatisfactory prices were mentioned by only one agent in ten. Every authority except the big farm organizations is agreed that although prices require adjustment, some up, some down, the present *general price level* is adequately high. Where a greater return is necessary, only *subsidies* can prevent the inflation which price increases will make inevitable.

What then is needed? We urge a double program. The first part is educational. It can be furthered both by private and government effort.

(A) The public must be shown promptly, vividly, imaginatively, effectively how to use to the best advantage the foods which will be available. Said Secretary Wickard on February 25: "I have told the American people numerous times in recent months that there is going to be enough food for essential diets in this country, provided we manage our food supplies wisely." This puts a part of the burden on the housewife, but she cannot shoulder it without *effective educational help,* of the sort at which our advertising fraternity is so adept. England has done a magnificent job in this respect. We have not.

The farming community must be shown promptly, vividly, imaginatively, effectively how to use with maximum efficiency the facilities it still has. A great deal of farm labor, particularly among the smaller farmers, is not even now fully employed. Much farm acreage is planted in unessential crops, or devoted to production requiring excessive labor per unit of nutrition. Planning for top efficient production is drastically needed—not planning for bigger production all along the line, which is probably impossible. Again England has shown us the way.

(B) (Here only government can help.) Farmers need positive help. The armed forces must be convinced by public insistence that farm men not in combat service abroad should be furloughed when needed for harvesting or other seasonal farm labor needs. Only in the last few days, some 2,000 conscientious objectors, all highly skilled farmers, have been made available to work on dairy farms, where they are badly needed. Certain highly skilled farmers not yet drafted should of course be deferred, as are key men in industry. Every other army does such things; we did them in the last war. We must do them again. The "land army" can help; *experienced* hands are what is lacking.

Existing farm labor should be quickly and efficiently re-allocated, or else supplied the wherewithal in credits, advice, general help to go into full employment, by means principally of crop loans on generous terms, coupled with supervision.

Crop loans are "available," but they are not being made. They are available only on paper, and by Congressional appropriation. The bankers are raising Cain about them, for fear a few "commercial" (i.e., profitable) risks might not go to the banks, but to government agencies. Perhaps this pressure accounts for the strange phenomenon of the Regional Agricultural Credit Corporation having padlocked its till, and until present writing, seemingly having lost the key.

Nor should it be forgotten that even with existing farm prices and industrial wages, some such relief as the depression food stamp plan will be necessary for certain impoverished people.

Finally, existing farm machinery should be "pooled" for maximum use, new machinery must be made available where really needed, and repair facilities and the supply of parts must not be allowed to degenerate.

* * *

In simple terms, what is needed is education for the consumer, so that she "may manage our food supplies wisely." Education for the farmer, so that he may use wisely the facilities he has. Help to the farmer to make up the deficiencies of labor, capital, machinery which now prevent his increasing his production. Some of these things it is too late to do for 1943; they should be started now for 1944. But there is still much that can be done to prevent 1943 shortages. The President has promised priorities for machinery and a "land army."

* * *

And there is one thing *every* citizen can help promote, and every citizen with a few feet of soil and a modicum of "know how" at his disposal must do. He will be very foolish if he doesn't. And that is plant a garden. In a few months' time, he may thank his stars for what he gets out of it.

THE EDITORS OF THE COMMONWEAL.

Things for the citizen to oppose:

All attempts at raising prices as a substitute for rationing. Thus milk producers have wanted higher prices for milk, on the theory that by automatic elimination of poorer purchasers, such prices would make rationing unnecessary.

All attempts on the part of Congress to increase price levels generally throughout agriculture.

All increase in acreage allowed to short-staple cotton and tobacco. It is scandalous that cotton acreage has not been reduced but has actually been increased, when this same land could be much more usefully planted in other crops. To a less extent, the same thing is true of tobacco.

All attempts to keep marooned in the South, farm labor, whether Negro or white, which could be used elsewhere to great profit.

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Economic Injustice in Quebec

The problems of French Canadian workers in industry.

By **Burton Le Doux**

IN THE last 25 years British Canadian (and American) control of the economic life of Canada has degenerated into dictatorship, the cumulative and brutal effects of which fall upon the French Canadian masses, not upon the British Canadian masses. Beginning in 1763, there have always been Britishers who have denounced the realities of the Canadian scene; today, many are supporting the determination of French Canadians to put an end to these conditions. But because of cultural, ethnical and religious feeling between French and British in Canada, always exacerbated in time of war, the country is now split wide open, more seriously than ever before in its history.

Maxime Raymond has become the foremost leader among French Canadians largely because, in the decade preceding this War, he stripped the conflict between French and British in Canada to its basic structure by exposing the directors of Montreal Cottons and Dominion Textiles, head and forefront of the textile monopoly in Canada. These men are part of one of the wealthiest combines among British Canadians, and draw their enormous pecuniary gains from the textile, banking and public utility worlds in a fashion that would make some of our own students of interlocking directorates and acrobatic bookkeeping sit up and take notice.

Dominion Textiles, for instance, started operations with $500,000 capital in 1905. Fortified by special privileges granted by Parliament, by exemptions from taxation and by an exorbitantly high tariff, this Company up to 1936 had paid 15 million dollars in dividends; its stock was valued at another 15 millions. This does not include profit not appearing in the balance sheet, estimated at a million dollars yearly since 1926, and charged off in the vague manner so well known to corporation experts; nor does it include the high salaries and bonuses paid yearly to its officers and directors. For years, while this was going on, the average wage paid to workers was $5.00 to $5.60 per week, day or night shift, shifts from 12 to 13 hours, not 8 or 10. Wages went up slightly in 1914-18, a dollar or two per week. But there are still many employees who have been on the job for years and who have never been paid more than $12.00 for 15 days work. In 1926 the company paid dividends of 150 percent on its original capital stock, while it reduced wages 10 to 20 percent.

These famine wages, motivated by greed and by greed alone, are paid to fathers of families who must support a wife and 4, 5 and up to 8 and more children. Amidst sanctimonious British Canadian accounts of the ignorance of the French Canadian people, their poverty and their physical afflictions, and with the cry of "priest-ridden people exploited by the Catholic Church" ringing in their ears, children are pulled out of school and shifted into the mills in a desperate attempt to save the family from starvation.

This pitiful wage is handed the worker after he has come out of the stifling atmosphere of the mills and waited for hours without shelter in the rain, snow or cold. With the money a small piece of paper is passed out to him; this indicates date of payment and amount; no indication whatsoever as to rate and method of payment, and no back talk allowed. This is a fair sample of working conditions—though the surface forms may vary—inflicted upon French Canadians by industrialists working in close alliance with politicians. Tuberculosis, infantile mortality, diphtheria, nutritional diseases in general are going up among French Canadians; they are going down among British Canadians where these conditions are not imposed upon them by British Canadian employers—in many cases the same employers who fasten them upon French Canadians.

Conditions at Montreal Cottons and Dominion Textiles today are no better; wage increases of the last few years have been inadequate to meet the rising costs of living in that time, let alone to rectify the original abuses. Meanwhile, war measures have assured the Directors of an ample labor supply and freedom from strikes.

Alcoa

Exploitation in Quebec is illustrated by the 1941 strike at the Arvida plant of the Canadian Aluminum Company. And it is here that enter American ideas, American money, and Americans in person to support British Canadian policies. The strike lasted five days, resulting in a loss of production of 32 million pounds of aluminum. The

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vast majority of the workers are French Canadian. The Federal Minister of Munitions (American-born C. D. Howe) greeted the strike by declaiming wildly about enemy (presumably nazi) attempts to disrupt production, and by charging French Canadians with sabotage and disloyalty. The whole British Canadian press picked up the charges, adding lurid embellishments of its own. Amidst great excitement, Canadian troops were rushed to the town.

Discontent among the workers at Arvida had existed for years; many were their grievances. The Catholic Workers' Syndicate had been unable to obtain redress, its repeated demands for arbitration of the issues having been ignored by the company. The strike exploded spontaneously, without authorization from syndicate leaders, in what American aluminum workers call the "knock-out department." (This is where a worker lasts not much more than three years, devices to protect his health being totally inadequate; in this country only Americans most desperately in need of a job will undertake this work.) Matters came to a head during a hot spell in July; workers had been finding their pay increasingly clipped by one special war tax after another, by various operations designed to ensure purchase of war stamps and "social security"—all this not adequately explained, but arbitrarily imposed—and by a lowering of their earnings, because of power failures blamable upon the company itself. Daily, dozens of workers had been carted out unconscious. The company did not pay the "knocked-out" workmen for lost time, and since it required the remaining workmen to service the aluminum pots of the unconscious without additional compensation, it turned in a handsome profit for itself but of blood, sweat and tears.

The final provocation leading to the strike was the circulation among the employees of information concerning the wages paid by the Aluminum Company in the US; this showed that the American workman was paid at almost twice the rate established for the French Canadian worker.

There was no sabotage, no destruction of property, no fighting or violence of any kind during the strike; this was confirmed afterwards by a Royal Commission.

It is a matter beyond dispute that the French Canadian worker is paid much less for the same work than is his fellow in Ontario or in the US. Yet there are many British Canadian and American corporations operating plants in two or even three of these regions. This wage differential is explained by the British Canadian and American operators concerned somewhat as follows: the lower wage scale in Quebec is normal. Because of the greater wealth of the US, and of its greater industrial activity, the US can support a higher wage scale and a higher standard of living than can Canada, limited as it is by a smaller population and a smaller market. Little is said about the higher scale in Ontario; the explanation is offered on the basis of comparison between Quebec and the US.

French Canadians reject this as "baby talk." They know that the aluminum industry in North America is a monopoly controlled by the Aluminum Company of America, that this corporation and its affiliates in oil, coke, steel, etc., is in effect a world empire of fabulous wealth and power beyond the dreams of Alexander—and like him seeking new worlds to conquer. French Canadians are not interested in such technicalities as the US court decision which has temporarily cleared the Aluminum Company of America of violation of our own anti-trust laws, nor in the virtual suspension of our Sherman Act for the duration. They know that the ownership and management of both the Canadian and the American companies rest in the same hands, that financial control of the Canadian Company by the American Company enables the latter to control production and price of aluminum in North America, that the Canadian Company is the world's largest exporter of this metal, that the Canadian Company does not compete in our domestic market with the American Company, and that, as established in a US court, the Canadian Company sells all the raw aluminum coming into the US to the American Company at special low prices.

French Canadians dismiss the transfer of raw aluminum from the Canadian Company to the American Company as an inter-corporation juggling act; this to them is the other side of a picture which in its entirety shows these two companies swapping aluminum ore in South America for reasons of convenience and profit to themselves alone. They are also aware that these companies dig up bauxite more cheaply in South America by using peon labor than it can be dug up here in the US, where we have plenty of bauxite of our own. French Canadians know that the cost of producing aluminum in Canada is lower than in the US because of an unwarranted wage differential, behind which this corporation takes shelter, and that what is saved by paying lower wages to the Quebec aluminum workers provides just so much extra cream for the operators, while it imposes the celebrated low living standard on Quebec.

In view of the charges of sabotage and disloyalty brought against them when they attempted to remedy these conditions, French Canadians were interested in the statements made in the US Senate by Senator LaFollette *only last July*. He asserted that the Aluminum Company of America had deliberately delayed capacity production in order to protect its post-war business operations, that the war production program's oldest bottleneck was created by this corporation with our own

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government officials in key posts serving either as innocent dupes or as conscious aids in a perfect monopoly. He continued by pointing out the intimate and dangerous ties between the Aluminum Company and I. G. Farben, the nazi government's principal stooge in the business world outside Germany. The Aluminum Company became a part of an international cartel in 1931, the details of which have never been made public. This much however is known: the cartel played into Hitler's hands, and exerted an important adverse influence upon our own aluminum and magnesium production. The Canadian Aluminum Company also became a member of the cartel in 1931. This cartel was broken up in *April,* 1942, five months after Pearl Harbor, and then only after a long investigation by our Justice Department, and a Federal Grand Jury indictment. It is significant that the Aluminum Company did not defend itself in court; it accepted a consent decree; this is old practice with this company when brought to book. French Canadians feel that to raise the cry of sabotage and disloyalty against the workers is a case of the wolf bleating among the sheep.

The latest Alexander-like coup of the Mellon aluminum interest in Quebec has just been glorified in the American press. To Americans familiar with the rise of the Mellon fortune out of World War I, its subsequent operations in Mexican and South American oil and the repercussions there, and with our own efforts to keep Mellon *et al* within the bounds of decency, it will come somewhat as a shock to learn that this group has now secured a strangle hold on what is the largest electrical power production area in the world, and that this coup was financed by money loaned to the Aluminum Company by the American government. The Shipshaw Power Development in Quebec was begun in October, 1941; it is now nearly completed, the work having been carried on under incredible hardships which killed 60 men on the job; night and day the work went on, regardless of temperatures ranging down to 30 degrees below zero. The project cost 105 million dollars as against 205 million for Boulder Dam; it will produce more power than does Boulder Dam. By far most of the workers were French Canadian; at the peak some 10,500 were employed; this number is now below 3,000, with more workmen being discharged daily. The Canadian Aluminum Company did not invest a dollar of its own money in this enterprise; title and ownership will rest in its hands after it has fulfilled its contracts—the sale of aluminum to the US—and if the gentle reader should feel that such sales alone are an inadequate reward for the managers and owners of the Aluminum Companies, which should be supplemented by a bonus equivalent to more than the potential value of Boulder Dam, let him study the balance sheets of the American and the Canadian Companies over the last 25 years.

Meanwhile, the electrical industry in Quebec operates without any effective supervision by the central government, and electrical current is sold to the Quebecois at three times the rate prevailing elsewhere. The Shipshaw development is the latest grab of Quebec water power by British Canadian and American interests, and French Canadians are rising *en masse,* rallying behind the cry, "Here is a whole people that is being oppressed and pauperized." There are too many families now left like those of the sixty workmen killed on this job, too many French Canadians turned into migrants in their own country and totally at the mercy of industrialists who gather unto themselves all the profit, all the social and political power, all the benefits and all the prestige associated with patriotism.

French Canadians are indignant at the trail of destruction the influences described here are leaving in French Canada. The few plums which have fallen to them through philanthropy and charity from these sources are looked upon disdainfully by the more articulate and uncorrupted leaders, and by the masses as bribery. It is folly to expect this people to support the war effort wholeheartedly. Throughout French Canada, and in the cities especially, the people are in a sullen and dangerous mood. In Montreal the atmosphere is charged with emotion, grim and oppressive, presaging a storm. Eighty-five percent of their voters refused last year to release the Mackenzie King government of its promise not to send conscripts overseas. This is clear indication to disregard the pronouncements of the few French Canadians associated with sinecures either in academic life or in the political flesh-pots of Canada, and of the few French Canadian industrialists who themselves, urged on by the spectacle of the financial success of British Canadians and Americans operating in Quebec, and unable or unwilling to remedy the conditions described here, exploit their own people no less than do the British Canadian and American employers.

In summary

French Canadians have seen the control of raw materials in Quebec and the means of their manufacture and distribution increasingly monopolized by British Canadians and Americans; they have seen the concentration of wealth producing a situation where 85 percent of the tenants in Toronto are proprietors while but 12 percent of the Montreal tenants own their own lodgings, a large part of the remainder living under conditions far from conducive to family and individual health and morality; in all the economic activities making for strength as a people, in the type of social organ-

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ization they are compelled to live in, they admit having lost ground. But there is another side to this picture. Constructive action to alter this situation radically has been slowly taking form; progress has already been made; with all the signs pointing to action that will shake the House Divided. It is beyond the scope of this article to enumerate these; they belong to a chronicle of the future. To Americans wishing to be informed of these events as they develop, a study of the writings and actions of Bourrassa, Pelletier, Groulx, Minville, Phillipe Hamel, Raymond, Paul Gouin, Heroux, to mention but a few, and of what is probably the most brilliant generation French Canada has ever produced, is recommended.

In the meantime, while the full force of the alliance between State power and money power is falling upon them, French Canadians are holding desperately to the processes of democracy to disengage themselves from servitude, believing all the while with Aristotle that "an unbridled democracy is exactly similar to a tyranny." First and foremost, this is a Christian people; religion is a living force among them; they reject the communist dictum "Religion is the opiate of the people," and are proceeding consciously in the basic Christian tradition, with the idea that this provides a more satisfactory solution of the problems of peoples living together than the outside world seems to afford.

Pukwana

"The peace-pipe, the smoke,
the breath, the spirit."

By **T. D. Lyons**

MY LAST JANUARY "West of the River" was mild and balmy as ordinary April weather. Luchaire had gone with Uncle Cardinelle to visit Baptiste Pourrière, who was also well and favorably known as "Big Bat," and was said to have been the frontiersman who did such famous execution at the wagonbox fight near Fort Fetterman, when the little company of thirty-odd soldiers with the aid of the famous plainsman stood off Red Cloud's army in the greatest exhibition of coolness and bravery known in the West.

I had traveled from my claim to Sentinel Butte northeast of Custer City to meet them and journey on to White Swan. Uncle Cardinelle said that the weather reminded him of what the Sioux called *Maja Oka Iawa,* which meant "goose-laying month" and corresponded to our April. When night came the mustangs were very tired and as we saw some log buildings—a log shack and a stable—we stopped for the night and put up the teams. There was a good big clump of cottonwoods nearby and Luchaire soon had an ample supply of firewood and a good fire going in the big fireplace.

Uncle Cardinelle explained that the improvements which we were occupying had once been a stage station on the route from the Missouri River to Fort Laramie and that the Belle Fourche Livestock Company still kept it in repair for the use of roundup crews. Belated travelers were welcome to its use and it had served as a haven of refuge for those who were on the road when a blizzard struck. In a chest in the corner Luchaire found coffee and oatmeal and this with our own supplies furnished a good supper. A sign on the chest advised, "You are welcome to everything. If you leave dirty dishes, we will know that you were horse thieves or some other brand of stinkers."

Uncle Cardinelle reminded us that the epithet "stinker" derived from the time of the great drowning of the tremendous buffalo herd that went through the soft ice of the Missouri. Some enterprising gentlemen skinned the drowned buffalo and the smell of the hide suggested a term of contempt for those guilty of such malpractice. Uncle Cardinelle's host "Big Bat" was a famous buffalo hunter as well as a scout of wide experience. He had told Uncle Cardinelle of his visit with Colonel F. W. Benteen, shortly after the disaster at the Little Big Horn fight. All who have any knowledge of that event recognize that Benteen was the hero of the fray and that it was his coolness as well as courage that saved the united command under Major Reno after the disastrous retreat across the river. Big Bat gave it as his opinion that this retreat was responsible for the failure of the entire attack, including the destruction of Custer and his troops. He explained that this was due to the peculiar psychology of the Indian—as long as the army was attacking and had the jump on the Sioux they were almost certain of success, but as soon as they retreated the Indians regarded this as an acknowledgment of defeat and became ten times as formidable. Charlie Reynolds, described in the official

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report as "guide and hunter," endeavored to prevent the making of the retreat and stood his ground until he was cut off by a hundred shrieking braves. He made a single-handed charge against them and went down under a fusillade of Sioux bullets from first-class Springfield rifles issued by the Agency for "hunting purposes."

Bat asked Benteen about Custer's unpopularity with some of the officers, including Benteen and Reno, and learned that Custer offended them by his custom of consulting only the scouts like California Joe and Charlie Reynolds and ignoring his subordinate officers. Before the Little Big Horn the only individual he talked plans over with was Bloody Knife, the famous Crow scout, for whom Custer always expressed deep affection. It was Custer's habit when he returned from a visit in New York with Lawrence Barrett, the actor, to bring back a box of presents for Bloody Knife. In the retreat across the river, Bloody Knife rode next to Major Reno and when a Sioux bullet or tomahawk knocked out his brains, they splattered on Major Reno. This incident was said to have temporarily demoralized that commander.

Bat asked Benteen what was the hardest thing to contend with when the command was besieged by the Indian army, made up of warriors from ten Indian nations and thought to number almost five thousand braves. Benteen answered, "The filth, stench and flies were a greater hardship than the Indian attacks. However, the pain and agony of the men who had arrow wounds was heart-rending especially when the poor fellows were calling out for water, which we were unable to procure. Later on a detail volunteered to bring water from the river and was successful. Things weren't so bad after that; but the trouble about an arrow wound is that the arrow cannot be pulled out; unless the surgeon can cut it out, it must go on through. The arrow wounds were nearly always fatal and the wounded men died in lingering agony."

* * *

In spite of Luchaire's generous replenishings of cottonwood chunks the log shack seemed to be growing colder, and the wind began to whistle dismally around the corners. When Luchaire pulled open the door we were surprized to find that there was a brisk snow storm on and a pretty strong northwest wind. We took an extra ration of oats to the broncos and pitched in plenty of oat straw. Then we pulled off the halters so that if the storm became a blizzard the animals would be loose and could crowd together for warmth. When we were back inside the shack, Uncle Cardinelle plugged all holes and spaces in and around the door so that no draft or snow came through. The roaring fire began to be felt and the room was soon snug. Uncle Cardinelle told the tale of some Chicago railway officials who had gone on a Buffalo hunt in the "Bad Lands" with Big Bat and Napoleon Jack and Colonel Cody. A storm somewhat similar to the one we were enjoying came up and there was a good deal of snowfall and a high wind. The Eastern visitors were convinced that they were undergoing a blizzard—an experience which they more or less relished (as long as they were in safety) as an experience to be narrated in Chicago, with of course some reasonable embellishment.

They asked Buffalo Bill several times if the storm wasn't a blizzard. He brusquely answered, "No," in a tone which indicated a degree of contempt for the notion. Later the wind got pretty high and some icy pellets drifted in through a small chink in the cabin door. A small mat of white snow was formed on the floor. One of the visitors pointed to this and said, "Colonel Cody, if this isn't a blizzard, tell us just what would be a blizzard." "Glad to accommodate," replied Buffalo Bill. "When six men can't hold this North Star blanket against a gimlet hole in that cabin door, you'll know that something like a blizzard is coming your way."

Next morning the late dawn was clear and brilliant. When the sun came up it was accompanied by the sun-dogs. Just before the first rays of the sun struck the Missouri River bluffs with their white carpet of snow, there was a beautiful rosy light that lingered on the hills for about a quarter of an hour, then changed to brilliant orange and then to ivory color. After sunrise the dazzling light on the perfectly white snow surface was almost blinding. When we reached the Missouri, we found to our surprise that the ferry was not running and that the thermometer had gone down to 31 degrees below zero. We stayed for an hour or two with an old friend of Uncle Cardinelle's who had the sobriquet of "Chief Smutty Bear," although he was not of the family of the great Yankton Chief of that name and of famous memory, but instead was distantly related to the great Brule family of Spotted Tail. About one p.m. our host told Uncle Cardinelle that there was a good safe bridge of ice clear across the Missouri, and we made ready to set out. We were greatly mystified at hearing him say that the day before in the fine weather he had heard the meadow-lark tell in his song that there would soon be a bridge of ice across the great river. As we drove over the ice we questioned the old river pilot who likewise had Sioux blood as to the meaning of the old Indian's story about the meadowlark. He assured us that the meadowlark gives warning concerning the future to the Sioux and that he himself heard the meadowlark sing, "Throwing Arrow is going to die; Throwing Arrow will not see two more suns." He explained that to white ears the song seemed to be merely the sweet plaintive

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melody of the beautiful songster of the prairie, but to Throwing Arrow it was a death knell. He immediately made ready for death according to the Sioux ritual, called all his family around him and began the death chant—within twenty-four hours he was slain by a party of Crow horse thieves.

We finally made our way to White Swan where we saw the ruins of the old flouring mill, six stories high. In the terrible flood when the Missouri was practically an inland sea fifteen miles in width, seventy people took refuge in the top story of the mill. Four stories were under water, but the skilled and energetic steamboat captains from Yankton finally came with a rescue party and brought them all to safety. When I took leave of my friends, the next day, Uncle Cardinelle was greatly interested to learn that I intended to take up the study of law. He approved the idea and said, "Now that the country is all fences and farms, something of that kind is good. We did not need it, when I first saw Dakota, although it then did not have that name. We had no courts, instead every man had to look out for himself. This way of today is no doubt better for most people, but it is no good to me. I enjoyed the buffalo hunt, the gold expedition and the trips up the Missouri on the steamboat. I heard too in those days of still nobler days that were gone, the days of the fur traders, the voyageurs, and the French coureurs. The men of that time thought that the days I saw in youth were tame just as I think these days are. Perhaps it is all just like the great prairie mirage which you can never come up with but always seems miles ahead of you."

When the spring vacation came, I went back to visit Luchaire at White Swan. He had written to me that Uncle Cardinelle had died, but when I saw him he told me the full story. Chief Smutty Bear had told Uncle Cardinelle a part of the meadowlark song which he did not reveal to us. He had said that according to the song Uncle Cardinelle would soon take another trip on the "canoe with the great pinions" (the steamboat). He would go up the Missouri and then turn up the Yellowstone River far beyond any known head of navigation and finally he would reach a great camp of hunters, including Charlie Reynolds and Buffalo Bill. But this time the big hunt was only for a peculiar animal—the White Buffalo.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

THE SEA-BIRD that nourished Eddie Rickenbacker and his famished comrades was a symbol of a great event, even if it cannot be fully accepted as a miraculous answer to prayer, in the waste-water of the Pacific. Both in itself, and in the stimulus it provided to the dormant faith of Americans, it is only one among a countless collection of similar stories. Some may be true. Others smack of the legendary quality that seems to go with all religious marvels, or spiritual affairs. For multitudes of citizens, however, for all spiritually isolated from supernatural events, or trends, all these reports, anecdotes and occasional myths have a very real, practical and material import. For example, there is a pragmatic truth for them in the famous news story, or amusing myth, of the Pearl Harbor chaplain, with his fighting slogan that has achieved the glory of being set to swing: "Praise the Lord—and pass the ammunition!" So did the profounder remark of the chaplain in the Philippines, who when asked if the fighting boys derived strength, or solace, from their various religious faiths said: "Well, there are no atheists in the fox-holes of Bataan."

It would be a gigantic myth having no realistic basis, if anyone should say that, as the Russians passed—and fired—with such wonderful results, the mountains of ammunition they hurled at the invading nazi hordes, they shouted, or sang praises to the Lord. Or that, because of the enormous impact of war in its most hideous forms, their re-awakened religious faith is fully restored to its ancient vigor. The most hopeful, or naïve, of chaplains, could not truthfully say that atheists had vanished from Russia—as of old the snakes disappeared from Ireland when Saint Patrick fought against the pagan Druid priesthood.

But it is merely factual reporting of current world news to affirm that religion was never fully banished from the vast population of Soviet Russia. The most stringent efforts of the organized clique of doctrinaire atheists, who applied the gospel of Karl Marx, as expounded by his militant disciple, Lenin, with cold and scientific ferocity and psychological cunning, to wipe out religion in the Russian people, has failed. The deep reservoir of strong religious faith, and of the cultural and historical traditions that go with long-held faith in any people, anywhere, are now re-awakened and pouring forth their powers of renovation.

It is the clear duty of reliable commentators upon world affairs to give thought to such a fact of world news. They must aid the developing public movement of opinion, which now perceives that such news is no longer a matter that has interest only for the sectarian religious press, or for pulpits and ecclesiastical experts. For a world-wide struggle to the death between vast religious and moral forces is now proceeding. Spiritual and ethical principles and laws and ways of life, congenial to our form of civilization, are opposing powerful anti-spiritual and anti-moral world-forces; Italian fascism, German nazism, Russian, or would, communism, and Japanese emperor and race self-worship, have all been revealed as forming one of the main causes of the world war. That force will remain among the chief problems which must be faced in the world after the war. So today our secular press and our thoughtful and responsible statesmen and reliable labor leaders and our universities and forums, as well as our

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various churches, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish, are all fully awake to the re-awakening of religion in Russia, and to similar phenomena throughout the world. And the majority of our people were ahead of their manifold and often purblind leadership in realizing such facts.

President Roosevelt has persistently striven to direct public attention along these lines. Lord Halifax, the British Ambassador to our land, is notable, but far from solitary, among other world statesmen in urging similar views. General Smuts in South Africa; many responsible leaders of exiled governments of the United Nations; Madame Chiang Kai-shek in China (and now among us); Gandhi's life-work in India (whether politically wise, or the reverse) must also be noticed. So, too, must the remarkable cooperative efforts of the Anglican, non-conformist, Catholic and Jewish leaders and people in Great Britain, and the similar beginnings of the same type of action in the United States and Canada. All these events and trends, of which only a few can be mentioned here, are clear proofs that the most modern, and socially hopeful, facts of our day-by-day news are those which record the awakening of the formerly sluggish, and at times apparently dying, forces of traditional forms of spiritual and moral power which formed, and now support, our American form of civilization.

Vice President Wallace's recent address at Ohio Wesleyan University directed particular attention to this problem, in connection with Russia. The rumor—a strong one which possesses much inherent probability—that Archbishop Spellman may visit Moscow to discuss the problem with Josef Stalin, will, if it turns out to be true, give fresh and enduring interest. It is not the first time that a Pope Pius has sent an emissary to negotiate with Soviet Russia. Pius XI did so when he sent a delegation—among them being Father Edmund Walsh—now of the School for Foreign Service at Georgetown University—to treat with Foreign Minister Chicherin, at the Genoa conference in 1922. That effort failed. The Soviet would not grant the irreducible minimum of liberty for the Catholic Church formulated by Pius XI. Today, and in the future, many competent observers think there are solid grounds to hope for far different and far happier results. If achieved, these results would bring Russia harmoniously to a place among the United Nations, not only on the fighting fronts, but on the permanent lines of peace in liberty.

The Stage & Screen

Richard III

IT WOULD be worth seeing a thousand dull plays wrought by morons and played by imbeciles if that were the necessary price of admission to the pleasures of seeing and hearing something so magnificent, powerful and profound as this version of "Richard III." This hard play, difficult in conception and in execution, has been brought to perfection by George Coulouris. No other play

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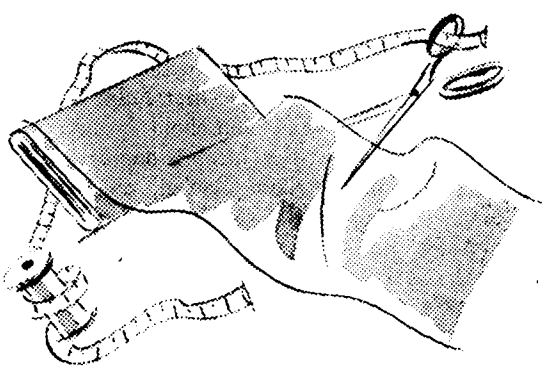

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Altman men's furnishings, main floor

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this season showed such masterful production. Barrymore was celebrated for his characterization of Gloucester. Hereafter it should be said that it belonged to Coulouris to make this part into what it should truly be. The deformity of Gloucester as portrayed by Coulouris is not so much physical as spiritual. The soliloquies, with him, never pass into blood and thunder exaggerations. Gloucester becomes a villain of principle whose passions are coldly venomous.

Queen Margaret is played by Mildred Dunnock. She gives unerringly a sense of the uncanny power of that fierce, half-mad woman. This version of Queen Margaret will stand with me as one of the most memorable performances of my experience. I should be willing to say that this part could never have been better played at any time since Shakespeare wrote it.

Buckingham is played by Philip Bourneuf. Placid, hypocritical, venal villainy never found better voice than Mr. Bourneuf brings to it. To see Mr. Bourneuf, fitted by nature to play the parts of honest men, show the characters of the vicious makes of vice itself something ingenious. You must admit this is unusual.

Production and lighting are by Jean Rosenthal. The scenery was designed by Motley. The incidental music was by George Hirst. Put on your list as a must. *(At the Forrest.)*

A Man's House

THIS IS the first American showing of John Drinkwater's Passion Play. The action is in the house of Salathiel in Jerusalem from the first Palm Sunday to the first Easter Sunday. The household is disorganized by our Lord. The servant-boy Jacob is one of His followers as is David also, to whom Rachel, one of Salathiel's daughters, is engaged. The son Mathias resents our Lord as a trouble-maker stirring up the lowly. Blind and unloved Esther, embittered by her deformity, shares the opinion of Mathias.

Out of the triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, followed by the crucifixion and resurrection, the house of Salathiel becomes divided forever. Esther, cured of blindness by the healing touch of our Lord, is converted by this miracle and goes away with her new found lover, the Roman soldier who pierced the side of our Lord; pierced it for pity and not from brutality according to this play. Rachel and David forsake Jerusalem to preach the gospel. Stiff in his unbelief, Mathias turns to work for the restoration of his father's house that it may endure forever among the foremost families of the Jews.

The play is static and something less than the great events surrounding it might have been expected to produce. Mathias (Frank Gibney) is supposed to be a hard, upright young man but the audience tended to laugh while he delivered himself of his strongest views. Augustin Duncan as Salathiel gives a heartwarming performance, and yet he too must have been disconcerted by the strange reaction of his audience which tittered in a moment intended to bring the second act to a close in a mood of rather melancholy tenderness. Possibly some magic may be distilled when the players are better versed in their parts. Direction was by Dennis Gurney. *(At the Blackfriars.)*

Apology

"APOLOGY" by Charles Schnee lasted a week. The action was developed by short scenes interpreted by a lecturer (Elissa Landi). It was amusing to hear the lecturer announce that her story would state nothing but pure "facts" regarding the life of a man who rose to great power and at the same time fell into feelings of gross insufficiency. This "scientific" story constructed of "pure facts" was intended to prove that human prudence is always and wholly calculating selfishness while human feeling or instinct is always right in making an ethical choice.

This play is to the naturalism of the thirties what Frederic Harrison's sermons were to Comte's religion of humanity: the perfect example of its futility.

JAMES N. VAUGHAN.

Ibsen! Thou Too Shouldst Be Living

THOSE who cried the loudest about Hollywood's escapist tendencies might regret their words when the output from the cinema capital swings too far in the opposite direction. We are having an avalanche of war films these days; there is one special group of these that is growing large enough to indicate a cycle—films concerned with conditions in occupied countries. The movies about France since the nazis moved in have been unconvincing; however, better ones are promised. Lately Norway has been the locale of an increasing number in this trend. "The Avengers" was disappointing. The first big production in the cycle was John Farrow's "The Commandos Strike At Dawn," which got rather melodramatic in the big climax, but set an excellent example in the realistic, semi-documentary tone of its portrayal of Norwegians and their resistance under the nazi yoke.

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The two latest additions are major films that will be seen and talked about for some time.

"The Edge of Darkness" has an outstanding cast and a foremost director. Portraying Norwegians are: Errol Flynn as a ringleader of the underground movement; Ann Sheridan as his fiancée and a strong force against cooperation with the nazis; Walter Huston as her father, a highly respected doctor who is one of the last of the community's citizens to join the underground; Ruth Gordon as his shy, retiring wife who is also finally swung over to rebellion against the conquerors in spite of her Quisling brother (Charles Dingle) and her weak, traitorous son (John Beal); Judith Anderson as the innkeeper, a Norwegian Madame Defarge whose hatred of the enemy was intensified by their killing her husband; Morris Carnovsky as the fearless, philosophical schoolmaster whose ivory tower is destroyed when the Germans beat him and burn his books in a public humiliation that fans the fires of rebellion in the angry townsfolk; and Roman Bohnen, Helene Thimig, Richard Fraser, Art Smith as other Norwegians who rebel against nazi tyranny. Helmut Dantine gives a forceful portrayal as the nazi captain who is driven by the failure of his evil genius for subjugating the Norwegians to further excesses of savagery. Lewis Milestone has directed this cast with intensity.

Politically "The Edge of Darkness" rings true in the battle between the powerful, brutal but frustrated nazis and the unconquerable Norwegians who are aided by English bullets. But dramatically the film is overdone. The screenplay by Robert Rossen, from the book by William Woods, emphasizes the sensational. And Milestone has directed it to heighten its theatrical values. The picture has a "Beau Geste" opening in which a German scouting party comes to this town to find a Norwegian flag flying valiantly and all the inhabitants dead; dead Norwegians are piled high and surrounded by dead Germans. Then in a flashback we get the story of the rebellion; the build-up is told with interminable slowness. Finally the rebellion occurs and proves as bloody a battle as the films have seen in a long time. Its outcome is the town peopled with dead that we see at the film's beginning. No doubt all this drives home to us the valiant fight that the oppressed Norwegians are putting up. The film's propaganda would have been stronger had the plot been made less exciting, less melodramatic.

Because it is a much simpler film, because it avoids sensationalism except in a few dramatic high spots, because it emphasizes character more than plot, *"The Moon Is Down"* is not only a better film than "The Edge of Darkness" but is one of the best films to come out of the present war. Comparisons between the two pictures are obvious. Both deal with the inhabitants of small Norwegian towns and show the unflagging resistance of a democratic people against the fascist conquerors. In neither film do the English actually appear, but in both English aid plays a large part in the efforts to sabotage the nazis. In both films the Germans are hard, powerful soldiers who still have the upper hand in the final scene but for whom failure is only a matter of time. In "The Moon," the nazi leader is a much different person from the young handsome, efficient but almost neurotic captain portrayed by Dantine in "The Edge." Colonel Lanser, made real in a magnificent performance by Cedric Hardwicke, is efficient too, but he is a wise, experienced officer who learned in the last war not only how a conquered people behaves but also the futility of expecting a complete vanquishment. Lanser installs himself in the Mayor's house because he knows through observing the Mayor he can tell what the people are thinking and doing. Henry Travers portrays the Mayor as an understanding, much loved and honorable man who loves and respects his fellow citizens; his quiet, proud wife (Margaret Wycherly); his close friend, the wise doctor (Lee J. Cobb); his good neighbors (William Post, Jr., as the man who dares to speak up to a brutal nazi officer, but who pays for his defiance with his life; and Dorris Bowden as his wife who is almost driven by her loneliness into the arms of a still more lonely young German lieutenant). Peter Van Eyck plays this disturbed, unhappy German with great skill. It is his good fortune to have the much quoted line about flies conquering the flypaper.

Nunnally Johnson, who produced this fine film, is also responsible for the compact script which he wrote from John Steinbeck's novel. Critics of the play made from the same novel protested that Steinbeck treated his Germans too sympathetically. I did not see the play, but I do not think this can at all justly be said of the movie. Our sympathies in this film never once sway from the Norwegians, unless one of them is Quisling like the storekeeper (E. J. Ballantine) who is held in contempt even by Colonel Lanser.

Irving Pichel deserves credit for his good direction throughout "The Moon." He was fortunate in having a capable and lesser-known cast to work with. His calm direction, their unfamiliar faces and straightforward performances do much to give the picture a realistic tone.

Because of the high quality of the three films on Norway, "The Commandos Strike At Dawn" (Columbia); "The Edge of Darkness" (Warners); "The Moon Is Down" (Twentieth Century-Fox), I wish Hollywood would think twice before making more films about occupied countries and leave the subject alone unless they can equal or surpass these. Serious subjects deserve serious treatment and intelligent productions.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

NEXT WEEK: Spring Book Number

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Twenty-Four Basic War Books

AMERICAN PUBLISHERS have been bringing out hundreds of books about the war. The number is so great, the range so varied, that the editors of THE COMMONWEAL are conscious of a real need of providing the thoughtful reader with some practicable means of making head or tail of so vast a plethora. The selection of two dozen books out of several hundred is the result. The list leaves out many good books along with the inconsequential, but the volumes it does include provide a minimum of information, of ideas, essential for grasping the issues and the prospects.

There are all kinds of books about the war. Highest on the best seller lists are the personal experience accounts of soldiers, Axis fugitives and front-line war correspondents. Each of these touches upon only a tiny if momentarily exciting corner of the proceedings, so we have not included any books of this character on the list that follows. For reader convenience we are separating the volumes which give the background essential for understanding how the war came from those dealing with the prosecution of the war itself and the problems of the peace.

This is not simply a war to disarm Hitler and Japan. It is a cataclysm in which a new society is taking form, a turning point in the history of the modern world. Hence the importance of seeing where we are going and what we are trying to do. THE COMMONWEAL is not of that school which holds that the only thing to do now is win the war of air and sea and battlefield, while the problems of the peace can take care of themselves once hostilities are suspended. We believe that the formulation of positive war aims and the setting up of adequate peace machinery are themselves most powerful war weapons.

To know the issues, the objectives and the practical means, Americans must see beyond the sensationalism and confusion of daily headlines and radio news bulletins. THE COMMONWEAL believes therefore that the books in both categories listed below are essential in taking day by day events out of their ephemeral framework and placing them in understandable relation and proportion.

The Background

JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS. *Christopher Dawson. Sheed and Ward.* $2.50.

The best overall picture of the true significance of the 1940's in the history of Western Civilization. The book reaches its climax in the section devoted to "The Secularization of Western Culture." A brilliantly written analysis of why we are where we are today.

DEMOCRATIC IDEALS AND REALITY. *Halford J. Mackinder. Holt.* $1.90.

Here, long before Professor Haushofer, is the basic thesis of geopolitics with its key conception of the "heartland." Published in this country over twenty years ago, it attracted little or no attention. This work is now reissued when those ideas have been marshaled for action.

THE REAL ITALIANS

By CARLO SFORZA

Count Sforza writes not of Fascist Italy but of the Italy that existed before Fascism and the Italy that will flourish afterwards.

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MEIN KAMPF. *Adolf Hitler. Houghton.* $1.89.
The complete text with interpretative notes by George N. Shuster and others, originally issued under the imprint of Reynal and Hitchcock, is now available in a popular priced edition. Compulsory reading still waiting to be carried out by most of us.

WAR AGAINST THE WEST. *Aurel Kolnai. Viking.* $4.00.
An amazing collection of citations that show how many and how violent were certain followers whom Hitler won all through the thirties. Issued four years ago in this country, this volume was one of the most prophetic of all war books, yet it was scarcely heeded. A sidelight on the educational job that must be done in post-war Germany.

THE REVOLUTION OF NIHILISM. *Hermann Rauschning. Ziff Davis-Alliance.* $3.00.
What a disillusioned Nazi Junker thought about it when the Hitler movement was unmasked. Once in charge at Danzig, Dr. Rauschning is now in self-exile fulminating about the way in which he was misled. Convincingly he lays the ghost as to the constructive side of the new order.

HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION. *Leon Trotsky. Simon and Schuster.* $2.98.
In three volumes now compounded into one book this hardly unbiased account of the other main stream in the contending struggle for power should be required reading. Trotsky wrote with force and brilliance; his account of many of the incidents of the Russian Revolution's rise to power is highly revealing.

THE MARTYRDOM OF SPAIN. *Alfred Mendizabal. Scribner.* $3.00.
The unhappy land where these two great forces of revolution and dictatorship first met in open combat. A thoughtful and feeling diagnosis of the Spanish situation by a Catholic who refused to accept the full claims of either side.

The War and the Future

OXFORD ADVANCED ATLAS. *J. Bartholomew. Oxford.* $3.85.
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THE WAR. (3 *Volumes.*) *Edgar McInnis. Oxford.* $2.00 *each.*
Each year Mr. McInnis compiles and writes a simple straightforward account of the war. Extremely useful for placing dates and happenings. Illustrated.

FRANCE MY COUNTRY. *Jacques Maritain. Longmans.* $1.25.
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the Judgment of THE NATIONS

BOOK OF THE DECADE?

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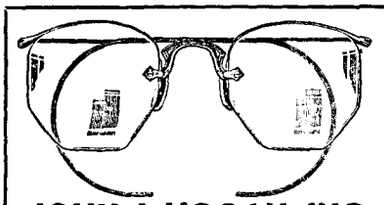

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English later this year by Doubleday. Until, after the war, fuller French and German sources are available, this is probably as complete a work as will be obtainable.

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The Inner Forum

Polish Bishop in America

ANOTHER CHAPTER in the harrowing story of Europe's children was told last week in New York by the Polish Catholic bishop, Most Reverend Joseph Gawlina, who is also military Ordinary for the Polish armed forces that formerly fought beside the Russian armies and which are now stationed in Iraq and Iran.

Bishop Gawlina, who has just come to America from his duties on the Eastern front, reports that since the war began nearly 1,000,000 Polish children have been deported to Russia. "I believe," he says, "that 40 percent of these children are now dead. I presume that some 600,000 children are still alive in Russia, but of these not more than 125,000 are with their parents. So far we have been able to evacuate 22,000 from Russia to Iran, India, and Africa, of whom all but 100 below three years of age have died."

Bishop Gawlina, whose face reflects the tragedy he has seen, describes a village in Iran where many of the children were taken: "It was a village of the dying. Clay barracks served as a hospital to the children. In the nursery there are only twenty healthy youngsters, all more than ten years of age, but they looked more like children of six. When they gathered round my table to greet me, and began to sing, 'From our sorrow and suffering Poland will arise to live,' I could not withhold my tears."

Appealing for a crusade of prayer on the part of American children, Bishop Gawlina told a group of 100 Polish-American priests in New York: "Let your children, who are intelligent, healthy, well-dressed and nourished, pray for my children who sleep in stables, covered with sores, half-naked and dying by the thousands."

Those who are concerned not only to pray for these Polish children, but to help them in a material way, can send contributions to Bishop Stephen Woznicki, Polish Children's War Relief, 1234 Washington Blvd., Detroit, Michigan. Bishop Woznicki is Vicar General and Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Detroit.

It is also interesting that Bishop Gawlina reports, on the basis of a five-month tour with his troops, that complete religious freedom does exist among the Polish armed forces. There were originally 72 priests serving as military chaplains, of which twenty have died. According to the Polish Catholic News Agency, however, there are no priests who have been allowed to administer to the 2,500,000 Polish Catholics who have been scattered throughout the length and breadth of Russia. There are 152 priests who have simply dropped out of sight, and these include the Bishop's own Vicar General.

CONTRIBUTORS

Burton LE DOUX was born of French Canadian parents in New England, was an officer in the American Army during the last war, and for many years has been a student of Canadian affairs. He is not a Catholic.

T. D. LYONS sends in another in his series of Dakota reminiscences.

"The vision will not be idle—"

"Today the majority of Englishmen, Mr. Dawson assures us, feel that they are fighting not only for their lives and property but for things greater than themselves and deeper than political or economic interests. They believe they are standing against violence and treachery and injustice in the cause of all mankind. The enemy which they meet is really the spirit of evil, a thoroughly secular spirit denying religion and all spiritual values, a spirit which has set out to wolf with hungry appetite all wealth, all power, all men—and all of man, his body and his soul. Materialized in the totalitarian state and ravening brutally throughout the world, this spirit of evil must be overcome, or Western civilization, and all spirituality and culture, will be destroyed.

"The encounter between democracy and totalitarianism, as Mr. Dawson points out, raises this fearsome question: How can democracy defeat totalitarianism without itself becoming totalitarian? How can democracy engage with the spirit of evil without itself becoming evil? If democracy should defeat the totalitarian state but nevertheless should be seduced into violence and treachery and injustice, then the real enemy, the spirit of evil, will be as triumphant in democracy's victorious peace as in its conquest. To avert the danger there is only one course to be followed: return to Christianity. The return to Christianity is the indispensable condition for the restoration of a spiritual order and for the realization of the spiritual community which should be the source of new life for our civilization.

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Charles W. Mulligan in
THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN

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